

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

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AMEMBASSY LISBON

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJECT: CHRISTMAS WEEK DEVELOPMENTS

REF: LISBON 7635

1. SUMMARY. CHRISTMAS WEEK IN THE NORTH WAS HIGHLIGHTED BY CONTINUED COMMUNIST AGITATION FOR RELEASE OF NOV 25 DETAINEES, BOOMING HOLIDAY SALES DESPITE RETAIL TRADE UNION CONFLICT AND SEVERAL MORE BOMBING INCIDENTS. END SUMMARY.

2. NOV 25 DETAINEES. OPORTO UNIVERSITY RECTOR RUI LUIS GOMES AND VICE RECTOR OSCAR LOPES HAVE BEEN LEADING FIGURES IN COMMUNIST CAMPAIGN TO EFFECT RELEASE OF NOV 25 DETAINEES AS DESCRIBED REFTTEL. SEVERAL HUNDRED FAMILY MEMBERS AND SYMPATHIZERS HELD ALL NIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE VIGIL OUTSIDE CUSTOIAS PRISON. SIMILAR DEMONSTRATION IS PLANNED NEW YEAR'S EVE. AS INITIAL BOARD OF INQUIRY COMPLETED ITS INVESTIGATION, SOME 20 PRISONERS INCLUDING FIVE OFFICERS WERE RELEASED BEFORE CHRISTMAS ON "CONDITIONAL LIBERTY" AN EQUAL NUMBER WERE TRANSFERRED TO CAXIAS PRISON NEAR LISBON INCLUDING MAJOR DINIS DE ALMEIDA WHO REPORTEDLY WAS SHIPPED OFF FOR HEALTH REASONS. MILITARY SOURCE ON INQUIRY BOARD REFUSED TO CONFIRM WHETHER TRIP

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TO CAXIAS INDICATED LONG PRISON TERM AS WAS CUSTOMARY IN THE

PAST. HE DID SAY THAT THOSE PRISONERS SUBJECT TO POSSIBLE TERM OF LESS THAN TWO YEARS MIGHT BE GIVEN CONDITIONAL LIBERTY. REMAINING DETAINEES IN CUSTOIAS HAVE NEW GROUP PLUMPING FOR THEM AS ANNOUNCED DEC 28: COMMITTEE OF SUPPORT FOR REVOLUTIONARY PRISONERS. NEW COMMITTEE REPORTEDLY HAS SAME OLD CAST.

3. HOLIDAY ECONOMY. SOME SHOPKEEPERS REPORTED RECORD SALES AS THROGS SPENT 13TH MONTH BONUS ON HOLIDAY GOODIES. THERE SEEMED TO BE A BOOM/BUST MENTALITY IN WAVE OF SHOPPING. THE ATTITUDE WAS BUY NOW IT WON'T BE AROUND LATER. SIMILAR "GET-IT-NOW" FEELING SEEMED TO BE EXPRESSED IN END OF YEAR WORKERS DEMANDS FOR PAY AND LEAVE INCREASES. AGITATION BY RETAIL INTERSINDICAL UNION WAS PARTIALLY SUCCESSFUL IN GETTING MANY SHOPS TO CLOSE DOORS FOR 4-DAY WEEKEND AT THE EXPENSE OF SEVERAL SHOP WINDOWS. THERE WAS MINOR SCUFFLING BETWEEN UNION PICKETS AND SHOPPERS INCLUDING REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS RETURNING TO FRANCE AND GERMANY. UNION PLANS SIMILAR 4-DAY WEEKEND DEMAND FOR NEW YEAR PERIOD AND MORE CONFLICT IS ANTICIPATED.

4. BOMBINGS. FOUR BOMB EXPLOSIONS WERE REPORTED CAUSING MATERIAL DAMAGE BUT NO INJURIES. ONE BLEW OUT OPORTO HOTEL WAITING ROOM DEC 23 IN WHICH 130 REFUGEES WERE QUARTERED. ANOTHER WRECKED A LEFTIST TYPOGRAPHY SHOP DEC 27. A THIRD BOMB WAS THROWN DEC 24 AT COMMUNIST (PCP) HEADQUARTERS IN SEASIDE TOWN OF POVOA DE VARZIM NORTH OF OPORTO. BOMB APPARENTLY BOUNCED OFF DOOR AND EXPLODED IN STREET BLOWING OUT WINDOWS IN 30 NEIGHBORING HOUSES. IRATE CITIZENS, AWAKENED BEFORE DAWN, DEMONSTRATED IN FRONT OF WHAT REMAINED OF PCP OFFICE DEMANDING THAT COMMUNISTS GET OUT OF TOWN. MILITARY ARMORED VEHICLES HAD TO BE SENT TO GUARD PCP QUARTERS.
PENNER

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